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SB203

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When it comes to sexual violence it is easy to bury ourselves in very real and very depressing statistics. To me after a while it becomes like the national deficit - so big it almost doesn't seem real. So we tune it out... Adopt an "it doesn't affect me" mentality.

I sat down to write this and thought well I will tell you all the statistics, but what do they really mean? Who are the 1 in 3 girls and the one in six boys. Are they someone else's kids?

The answer is NO. They are our kids, in our community, with no exceptions to race, color or economic status. In my daughters 2nd grade class of 18, those statistics would mean 3 of her female friends and one of her male friends will experience sexual assault by the time they graduate high school. In my daughters kindergarten class of 18 it is 4 of her girlfriends and 1 of her boy friends. Of those 9 friends - statistics also support that we MAY only know about 1 of them to help them cope and understand their own needs.

So with those diplomas we will be sending them off to the world according to the CDC with higher rates and chances of:

Unwanted pregnancy

Chronic pelvic pain

Gastrointestinal disorders

Gynecological and pregnancy complications

Frequent migraines

Back pain

Facial pain

Shock

Denial

Fear

Confusion

Anxiety

Withdrawal

Guilt

Nervousness

Distrust

Post traumatic stress disorder which can result in emotional detachment, sleep disruptions, flashbacks, mental replay of assault

Chronic psychological consequences- depression, attempted suicide, alienation, not to mention social issues behavioral consequences

ALSO higher rates of alcohol and drug abuse, prostitution and negative diet behavior like fasting, vomiting, or over eating to name a few.

AND there is another side to this education – who are the people who assault? The CDC cites that in 2010 2198 juveniles were arrested for forcible rape and 35,001 arrested for aggravated assault. Using just an average of the common statistics (4.5) would suggest that 488 of those same 2198 juveniles *could* have been sexually abused themselves. You see we have two growing problems. **This education wouldn't just prevent victims. It would prevent assailants. Too often - hurt kids, hurt kids.**

Facing assault head on is a difficult task. It is personal. It is often hard to comprehend. It is painful and alarming. None the less it is REAL. And Erin's law wouldn't just work to prevent it... It could catch it. It could stop it. It can educate both the potential victim and the potential abuser. Opening the conversation to all ages would be life altering...and begin the work of raising new generations.